



If You Are on SSI You Must Act Now to Get More Food Assistance Before It Is Too Late

In January 2006 DSHS will mail letters to those on SSI who will be getting more food assistance (Food Stamps) because of a recent lawsuit. You will get a letter if you receive SSI and got a Quest card to help pay for food under the Washington State Combined Application Program (WASHCAP) in January, February, March or April 2005.

What happens if I get this letter?

1. DSHS will add \$17.00 to your Quest card for each one of these months that you were on WASHCAP.
2. DSHS will tell you that you might get more help in the future by applying for the regular Food Stamp Program - Basic Food by the deadline in the letter.

What should you do if you get a letter?

You should call DSHS toll-free at **1-877-380-5784** to find out if you would get more food assistance under Basic Food. If so, ask them to mail you an application. **You must sign and return the application to DSHS before the deadline in the letter or it may be too late to get more help by changing food programs.**

How do I apply for Basic Food? You need to get an application from DSHS, your local Social Security office, online or from an organization serving the elderly or disabled. When you fill out the form, make sure you give:

- Your name, address, and phone number;
- Tell DSHS you are on SSI;
- Answer questions about your housing, heating and utility costs; and
- Sign the form.

DSHS can get the other information it needs from the Social Security Office. You can ask for a phone interview on your application.

DSHS will ask you to show proof of your housing, heat and utility costs. They have a form that your landlord can fill out. You can also show them bills and receipts. If you get LIHEAP energy assistance, tell DSHS as this will make you eligible for their highest utility allowance.

What should I do if I need help with my application or it is denied?

Your local DSHS or Social Security office can help you complete an application for Basic Food. You can also ask for a referral to a local Basic Food Education & Outreach Program. If DSHS denies your application, call the Northwest Justice Project CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 or the Senior Hotline (for clients age 60+) at 1-888-387-7111 for free legal advice.